

# The Church of the Damascus Road

## Echo!

Volume 12  
Issue No. 4b  
August 2009  
Fort Dodge & Rockwell City, IA



## Belongs to God

The Republic of These United States Belongs to God — “It was the Lord who put into my mind—I could feel His hand upon me—the fact that I could sail from here to the Indies. All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter and ridiculed me. There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit because He comforted me with rays of marvelous inspiration from the Holy Scriptures.”

These lines were taken from the Journal of Christopher Columbus. God has indeed placed Himself a nation, in many cases miraculously developed, where the Word could be spread and He be openly worshipped. There are some dark times throughout our national history, but as with Israel it is the remnant of His people who pray and worship Him that prospers us all. All of us who slumber need to awaken and pray.

If we humble ourselves and pray He will heal our land (2 Chronicles 7:14)

—9/26/08 — William Bell

## 1000 Marbles...

The older I get, the more I enjoy Saturday mornings. Perhaps it's the quiet solitude that comes with being the first to rise, or maybe it's the unbounded joy of not having to be at work. Either way, the first few hours of a Saturday morning are most enjoyable.

A few weeks ago, I was shuffling toward the basement shack with a steaming cup of coffee in one hand and the morning paper in the other. What began as a typical Saturday morning, turned into one of those lessons that life seems to hand you from time to time.

Let me tell you about it. I turned the dial up into the phone portion of the band on my ham radio in order to listen to a Saturday morning swap net. Along the way, I came across an older sounding chap, with a tremendous signal and a golden voice. You know the kind; he sounded like he should be in the broadcasting business. He was telling whomever he was talking with something about “a thousand marbles.” I was intrigued and stopped to listen to what he had to say.

“Well, Tom, it sure sounds like you're busy with your job. I'm sure they pay you well but it's a shame you have to be away from home and your family so much. Hard to believe a young fellow should have to work sixty or seventy hours a week to make ends meet. Too bad you missed your daughter's dance recital.

He continued, “Let me tell you something Tom, something that has helped me keep a good perspective on my own priorities.” And that's when he began to explain his theory of a “thousand marbles.” “You see, I sat down one day and did a little arithmetic. The average person lives about seventy-five years. I know, some live more and some live less, but on average, folks live about seventy-five years. Now then, I multiplied 75 times 52 and I came up with 3900, which is the number of Saturdays that the average person has in their entire lifetime.

“No, stick with me, Tom, I'm getting to the important part.” “It took me until I was fifty-five years old to think about all this in any detail”; he went on, “and by that time I had lived through over twenty-eight hundred Saturdays. I got to thinking that if I lived to be seventy-five, I only had about a thousand of them left to enjoy.

“So I went to a toy store and bought every single marble they had. I ended up having to visit three toy stores to round up 1000 marbles. I took them home and put them inside of a large, clear plastic container right here in the sack next to my gear. Every Saturday since then, I have taken one marble out and thrown it away.” “I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focus more on the really important things in life. There is nothing like watching your time here on this earth run out to help get your priorities straight.”

“Now let me tell you one last thing before I sign-off with you and take my lovely wife out for breakfast. This morning, I took the very last marble out of the container. I figure that if I make it until next Saturday then I have been given a little extra time. And the one thing we can all use is a little more time.”

“It was nice to meet you Tom, I hope you spend more time with your family, and I hope to meet you again here on the band. 75 year Old Man, this is K9NZQ, clear and going QRT, good morning!”

You could have heard a pin drop on the band when this fellow signed off. I guess he gave us all a lot to think about. I had planned to work on the antenna that morning, and then I was going to meet up with a few hams to work on the next club newsletter.

Instead, I went upstairs and woke my wife up with a kiss. “C'mon honey, I'm taking you and the kids to breakfast.” “What brought this on?” she asked with a smile.

“Oh, nothing special, it's just been a long time since we spent a Saturday together with the kids. Hey, can we stop at a toy store while we're out? I need to buy some marbles....

—Author Unknown

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## Where to Look

We look to others For the answer.  
Take what they have to offer.  
Do we really need more?

We all need love. It is hard to come by  
Except from above.  
He will never ask why.  
So listen to your heart;

If you are good and pure  
You are a priceless work of art.  
Inside ourselves lies the cure.

I hope that one day You will see  
His love is here to stay,  
He hears your every plea.

—Joshua Vasa CCF 2008

## The Lord's Prayer

[Note: The person praying (regular type); GOD (italics)]

Our Father Who Art In Heaven.

Yes?

Don't interrupt me. I'm praying.

But -- you called ME!

Called you? No, I didn't call you. I'm praying.

Our Father who art in Heaven.

There -- you did it again!

Did what?

Called ME. You said, 'Our Father who art in Heaven' Well, here I am. What's on your mind?

But I didn't mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the day. I always say the Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel good, Kind of like fulfilling a duty.

Well, all right. Go on.

Okay, Hallowed be thy name.

Hold it right there. What do you mean by that?

By what?

By 'Hallowed be thy name'?

It means, it means . . . Good grief, I don't know what it means. How in the world should I know? It's just a part of the prayer.. By the way, what does it mean?

It means honored, holy, wonderful.

Hey, that makes sense. I never thought about what 'hallowed' meant before. Thanks. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth as it is in Heaven.

Do you really mean that?

Sure, why not?

What are you doing about it?

Doing? Why, nothing, I guess. I just think it would be kind of neat if you got control of everything down here like you have up there. We're kinda in a mess down here, you know.

Yes, I know; but, have I got control of you?

Well, I go to church.

That isn't what I asked you. What about your bad temper? You've really got a problem there, you know. And then there's the way you treat other people -- including family. And what about your drinking habits?

Now hold on just a minute! Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of the rest of those people at church!

Excuse ME. I thought you were praying for MY will to be done. If that is to happen, it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it. Like you -- for example.

Oh, all right. I guess I do have some hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I could probably name some others.

So could I.

I haven't thought about it very much until now, But I really would like to cut out some of those things. I would like to, you know, be really free.

Good. Now we're getting somewhere. We'll work together - You and ME. I'm proud of You.

Look, Lord, if you don't mind, I need to finish up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does. Give us this day, our daily bread.

You need to cut out the bread. You're overweight as it is.

Hey, wait a minute! What is this? Here I was doing my religious duty, and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my hang-ups.

Praying is a dangerous thing. You just might get what you ask for. Remember, you called ME -- and here I am. It's too late to stop now. Keep praying. (... Pause...) Well, go on.

I'm scared to.

Scared? Of what?

I know what you'll say.

Try ME.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

What about Matt?

See? I knew it! I knew you would bring him up! Why, Lord, he's hurt me, taken advantage of me and never apologized. He never paid back the money he owes me. I've sworn to get even with him!

But -- your prayer -- What about your prayer?

I didn't -- mean it.

Well, at least you're honest. But, it's quite a load carrying around all that bitterness, anger and resentment isn't it?

Yes, but I'll feel better as soon as I get even with him. Boy, have I got some plans for him. He'll wish he had never been born.

No, you won't feel any better. You'll feel worse. Revenge isn't sweet. You know how unhappy you are -- Well, I can change that.

You can? How?

Forgive Matt. Then, I'll forgive you; and the hate and the sin, will be Matt's problem -- not yours. You will have settled the problem as far as you are concerned.

Oh, you know, you're right. You always are. And more than I want revenge, I want to be right with You . . . (sigh). All right, all right... I forgive him.

There now! Wonderful! How do you feel?

Hmmmm, well, not bad. Not bad at all! In fact, I feel pretty great! You know, I don't think I'll go to bed uptight tonight. I haven't been getting much rest, you know.

Yeah, I know. But, you're not through with your prayer are you? Go on.

Oh, all right. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Good! Good! I'll do that. Just don't put yourself in a place where you can be tempted.

What do you mean by that?

You know what I mean.

Yeah. I know.

Okay. Go ahead. Finish your prayer.

For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Do you know what would bring me glory -- what would really make me happy?

No, but I'd like to know. I want to please you now. I've really made a mess of things. I want to truly follow you. I can see now how great that would be. So, tell me, how do I make you happy?

You just did.

—Author Unknown

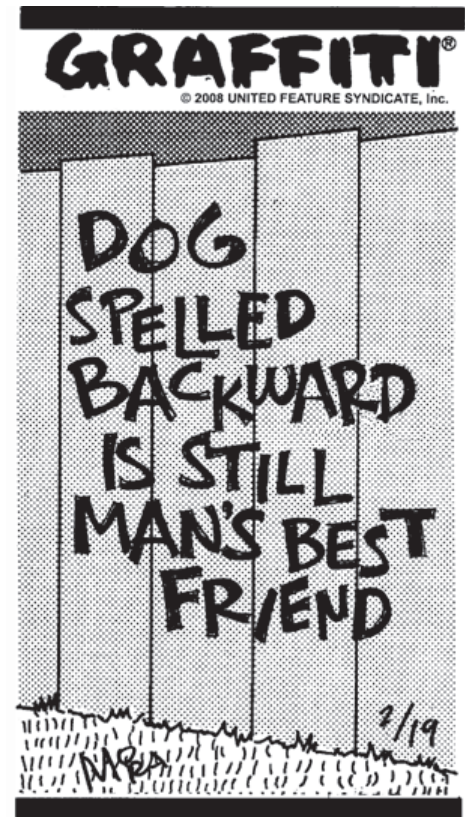
## Fasting/Prayer/Praise

In 2 Chronicles 20 there is a story of King Jehoshaphat. Armies came against him that were too strong for them to defeat. We have many problems that seem too big for us.

When we figure out that the battles of life are not ours, but God's, we have hope and will see God's awesome power at work. Look and see how the King dealt with his problem.

God inhabits the praises of his people.

—Bill Bell 4-12-09



## Love Is..

"When someone loves you, the way they say your name is different. You just know that your name is safe in their mouth."

Billy - age 4

The Church of the  
**Damascus Road**  
*Echo!*

Issue 12.4b

August 2009

An official publication of The Church of the Damascus Road, a Christian Community of Reconciliation, serving the inmate population of the correctional facilities at Rockwell City and Fort Dodge, Iowa.

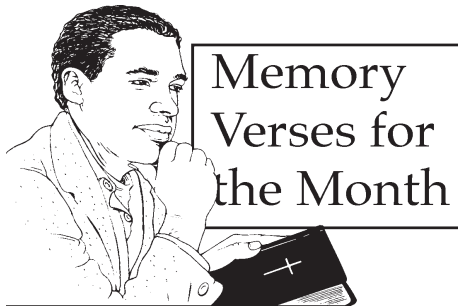
Rev. Paul E. Stone, Pastor  
Rev. Carroll Lang, Editor



## Memorize Scripture?

The problem we face is not how to better memorize Scripture, but how to receive the greatest benefit from what we do memorize. The ministry of the Holy Spirit is vital here. Plus, we must learn to assimilate the truth we receive through the process of meditation explained in this rhyme... "I have six helping friends, they taught me all I knew. They are: why, what, how, where, when, and who!"

— Follow Up Ministries



In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight (Proverbs 3:6).

As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us (Psalm 103:12).

I will cleanse them from all the sin they have committed against me and will forgive all their sins of rebellion against me (Jeremiah 33:8).

From six calamities he will rescue you; in seven no harm will befall you (Job 5:19).

## A Note to Our Readers:

Encourage all of you to submit articles to the Flash, and Echo for us all to read. It's good to hear personal testimonies of how God has inspired you. Let us know what's on your minds, and in your hearts.

—Tony Halsrud FDCF



## Story Tellers

Story Tellers is the third Friday of every month at FDCF and the third Saturday at NCCF unless a scheduling problem arises. You can read a book to your child on tape, and then send the book and audio cassette tape home for your child to listen to you read to them, and read along with you. The tape, and book are free to you. You just pay regular mail home to your child, or, at FDCF, you can send them out on a visit like regular property through R&D. Sign up with Pastor Stone, or at our regular worship service, or with any Inside Church Council member.



## Upon your hearts

The Bible is the perfect guidebook for living God-pleasing lives. Deuteronomy 6:6-8 (NIV) tells us how to remember the Scriptures.

Use the picture clues and Word Bank below to finish the verses.

### WORD BANK

children	road
commandments	sit
down	Talk
foreheads	Tie
hands	up
hearts	walk
home	



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10



11



12



13

"These (1) \_\_\_\_\_ that I give you today are to be upon your (2) \_\_\_\_\_. Impress them on your (3) \_\_\_\_\_. (4) \_\_\_\_\_ about them when you (5) \_\_\_\_\_ at (6) \_\_\_\_\_ and when you (7) \_\_\_\_\_ along the (8) \_\_\_\_\_, when you lie (9) \_\_\_\_\_ and when you get (10) \_\_\_\_\_. (11) \_\_\_\_\_ them as symbols on your (12) \_\_\_\_\_ and bind them on your (13) \_\_\_\_\_."

Answers: (1) commandments; (2) hearts; (3) children; (4) talk; (5) sit; (6) home; (7) walk; (8) road; (9) down; (10) up; (11) Tie; (12) hands; (13) foreheads

## Inmate Artwork

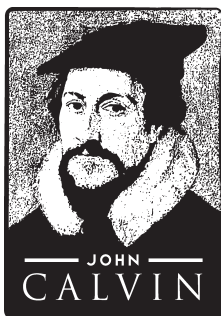


*"Put on the full Armor" —John Reynolds, FDCF*

### Fight the Good Fight (as Paul called it)

**W**e fight as those swatting the air, enemies of flesh and blood that do not exist. It is the spiritual battles that we are required to fight, and as we devote our time to them God gives us victory. Psalm 18:37-38.

*—William Bell FDCF*



### Happy Birthday, John Calvin!

**J**uly 10th marked the 500th Birthday of the reformer, John Calvin. Calvin's writing and preaching provided the seeds for the branch of theology that bears his name. The Presbyterian and other Reformed churches, which look to Calvin as a chief expositor of their beliefs, have spread throughout the world. Calvin's thought exerted considerable influence over major religious figures and entire religious movements, such as Puritanism, and some have argued that his ideas have contributed to the rise of capitalism, individualism, and representative democracy in the West.

*—from Wikipedia*

## Worship Opportunities

### Worship & Bible Study

#### FDCF Fort Dodge

6:30pm Wednesdays .....Holy Communion

6:30pm Fridays ..... Prayer & Bible Study

#### FDCF Pastor Contact Hours

2:00pm - Count Wednesday

2:00pm - Count Friday

#### NCCF Rockwell City

6:30pm Tuesdays .... Prayer & Bible Study

6:30pm Thursdays .....Holy Communion

#### NCCF Pastor Contact Hours

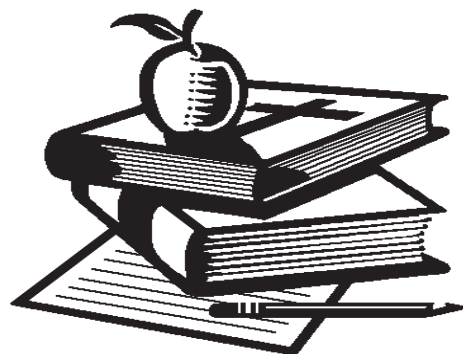
2:00pm - Count Tuesday

2:00pm - Count Thursday



### Articles Invited

**T**he editor of this newsletter is inviting **all readers** to contribute articles, poetry, art work, and opinions for the newsletter. So don't be bashful. Give all your newsletter submissions to Pastor Stone.



### Check Them Out!

**T**he Church of the Damascus Road Librarians are inviting you to come to the chapel (MPR 23 in FDCF H Building; Treatment Center Room A in NCCF), and "check out" the books, tapes and compact discs in our library! There are many genres of books to choose from! We hope to see you there!